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Weekly Update: H1N1 – A New Kind of Flu – What You Need to Know!

Susanne Kufahl, Assistant Administrator and Public Information Officer
Riley County-Manhattan Health Department
2030 Tecumseh Road
Manhattan, Kansas 66502
785-776-4779 x 225
sk.rchealth@kansas.net

H1N1 Vaccine Availability

The Riley County-Manhattan Health Department will hold its next H1N1 flu vaccination clinic on **Tuesday, November 10th from 4:00 – 5:30**. We will have several different types of H1N1 vaccine available for specific populations; nurses will assign dosage types. We will serve all those in line by clinic closing time, unless we run out of vaccine. The health department only has H1N1 vaccinations available during these special clinic times.

School clinics are planned for Riley and Blue Valley school districts on November 23rd and 30th. The Manhattan school district is planning school clinics for early December. KSU Lafene Student Health Center is planning to hold their first vaccination clinic next week.

Notable Changes

The eligibility guidelines for these clinics have changed to include new populations (teachers and police who act as first responders) and according to the National Center for Disease Control's (CDC) broader categories of high risk populations.

We will have approximately 1000 doses to offer to the following population groups (in no particular order):

- 1) Pregnant women
- 2) Persons between the ages of 6 months and 24 years
- 3) Persons between the ages of 25 and 64 years who have chronic medical conditions that put them at higher risk for influenza-related complications
- 4) Health care workers, teachers, and emergency medical services personnel including police who act as first responders
- 5) Caregivers for, and people who live with, infants under 6 months of age

Other populations are not yet covered as eligible populations. Active military personnel should receive their vaccination on post. Chronic medical conditions that may place persons ages 25-64 at increased risk for flu complications include (but are not limited to) asthma, heart disease (not high blood pressure), diabetes, kidney and liver disorders, epilepsy, cerebral palsy or immunosuppression.

Child Dosage Information

Children under 10 years of age require two doses of H1N1 vaccine, 28 days or more apart. This is true regardless of what type of H1N1 vaccine a child receives. A 28 day wait is also required between any two

live vaccine doses (these could include vaccinations for chicken pox, the MMR, and others). Please count the days and be sure to get your child a second dose!

The vaccination process will be much quicker for you, if you arrive with completed paperwork.

Each person should have a consent form, a HIPAA form, and (if you have insurance) a health insurance form. These forms can be downloaded from this website. Also please bring a copy of your insurance card (front and back) with you. This is necessary even if we have your insurance information on file because H1N1 data is entered into a separate computer system. H1N1 vaccine is free. Fees for administration of the vaccine will be billed to insurance. Only insurance will be billed, not individuals.

We will be receiving ongoing shipments of vaccine and will continue to offer clinics several times each week as supply allows. Some private providers will have some supply as well for their high risk patients. Sometimes a clinic may deplete the supply, but we anticipate ongoing shipments. Watch www.rileycountyks.gov for changes in vaccine availability or call 776-4779 extension 297.

Protect Your Family

While the H1N1 flu is proving mild for many people, some people are dying from it, including people who are young and otherwise healthy. To date, 17 Kansans have died from H1N1. The H1N1 vaccine has an excellent safety profile. It has been extensively tested and it cannot give you the flu. It is important to remember that the science of flu vaccine is safe and well established. What is different this year is this particular virus, which has shown the capability to attack a younger age group and sometimes cause serious complications. The H1N1 vaccine is your best defense against this flu. We recommend that people get vaccinated as soon as it becomes available for their population or age group, even if they have already been sick.

Simple healthy habits will also help protect you, such as hand washing, covering your cough, and staying home when you are sick. Please remember that most otherwise healthy people who contract the flu do not need to go to the doctor or emergency room. Staying hydrated and getting plenty of rest can save a trip to the emergency room and save resources for those who are severely ill.